

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2889

INFO AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 2756

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: UNIVERSITY RIOT WAS TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE FOR ITALIAN
COMMUNISTS

REF: ROME 2721

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE' FEBRUARY 18, MINISTER
FOR LABOR, TINA ANSELM, EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THE
RIOTS BY LEFTIST STUDENTS AT ROME'S UNIVERSITY (REFTEL),
WHEN COMMUNIST LABOR LEADER LAMA WAS DRIVEN FROM THE PLAT-
FORM, WERE A CRUSHING EXPERIENCE FOR COMMUNIST DEPUTIES
AND LABOR OFFICIALS. THE SHOCK OF BEING CHARACTERIZED AS
BEING PART OF THE ESTABLISHMENT, BEING DRIVEN VIOLENTLY
FROM THE SCENE, WAS AN EXPERIENCE UNIQUE FOR ITALIAN COMMUNISTS
AND IN ANSELM'S VIEWS BOUND TO CAUSE SERIOUS SOUL-SEARCHING
WITHIN THE PARTY. ACCORDING TO ANSELM, LAMA, FURIOUS AT THE
TREATMENT HE HAD RECEIVED, CALLED A MEETING OF THE FEDERATION
OF UNIONS INCLUDING THE CHRISTIAN CISL AND SOCIALIST/REPUBLICAN
UIL AND DEMANDED THAT THE UNIONS CALL A 4-HOUR
STRIKE FOR FEBRUARY 18 TO EXPRESS WORKERS' OPPOSITION
TO THIS RUDE TREATMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF ITALY'S LARGEST
UNION, THE CGIL. THE LEADERS OF THE OTHER TWO UNIONS,
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BENECUTO OF UIL AND MACARIO OF CISL, REFUSED TO GO
ALONG WITH LAMA, TELLING HIM THAT THEY HAD HAD SIMILAR
EXPERIENCE AT THE HANDS OF COMMUNISTS CROWDS; IN EFFECT,
THEY INVOTED HIM TO "JOIN THE CLUB".

2. THE RIOTS AT ROME'S UNIVERSITY HARSHLY ILLUMINATED THE
COMMUNISTS' DILEMMA. THEIR SYSTEM OF HIGHLY ORGANIZED

DISCIPLINED FOLLOWERS WHICH MOVED IN TO TAKE OVER THE
PROTEST AT THE UNIVERSITY (REFTEL) DIDN'T WORK IN THE
PRESENT ATMOSPHERE. THIS EVENT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY GIVE
COMFORT TO THOSE WITHIN THE PARTY WHO HAVE OPPOSED THE
RESPONSIBLE PRO-MIDDLE CLASS POLICY OF BERLINGUER. HOWEVER,
TO THE EXTENT THAT SUCH A REACTION LIMITS BERLINGUER'S
ABILITY TO PURSUE HIS "POLICY OF RESPECTABILITY" AND TO
SUPPORT THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT, IT COULD HAVE A NEGATIVE
IMPACT ON ITALIAN POLITICAL STABILITY AND ON PROSPECTS FOR
SUCCESS OF ITALY'S ECONOMIC STABILIZATION PROGRAM.
(SEE ROME 2720).BEAUDRY

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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